



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE  
3040 BIDDLE ROAD  
MEDFORD, OREGON 97504

## ROGUE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER HELLGATE RECREATION SECTION HAZARDOUS FUEL REDUCTION PROJECT -- *Taylor Creek Neighborhood Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project* --

Decision Memorandum on Action and for Application of Departmental Categorical Exclusion 1.12  
CE # OR 117-08-31

### I. Purpose and Need for the Action

**A. Proposed Action Title / Type:** Taylor Creek Neighborhood Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project. This Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) hazardous fuel reduction project is located in T34S, R8W, Section 36; T34S, R7W, Section 31; T35S, R8W, Section 1; T35S, R7W, Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 15. Approximately 159 acres in the neighborhood would be treated.

**B. Location:** BLM and non-federal lands in vicinity of the Hellgate Bridge along the east bank of the Rogue River.

**Township/Range/Section:** T34S, R8W, Section 36; T34S, R7W, Section 31; T35S, R8W, Section 1; T35S, R7W, Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 15.

**Land Use Allocation:** Congressionally Reserved Rogue National Wild and Scenic River and non-federal lands within the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Hellgate Recreation Corridor.

### C. Need / Rationale for the Proposed Action:

The Taylor Creek Neighborhood is in the project area addressed in the 2003 Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Hellgate Recreation Section Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project (EA # OR110-03-14). The purpose of the larger project and the Neighborhood Project are described on page 2 of the EA. The need and rationale are that risk of wildfire along the river is high, the values at risk (property and scenic) are high and fuel hazard reduction is needed to reduce the potential for a high intensity wildfire, and to increase the potential for effective and safe fire suppression.

### D. Description of the Proposed Action:

Fuel hazard treatments are proposed in T35S, R7W, Sections 4, 5 and 6. See attached Taylor Creek Neighborhood Hazardous Fuel Reduction Plan.

## II. Plan Conformance

The Taylor Creek Neighborhood Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project's proposed action is in conformance with the following plans:

- *Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Hellgate Recreation Section Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project Plan* (Decision Record of October 28, 2003; Environmental Assessment #OR110-03-14 of August 2003;
- *The Rogue National Wild and Scenic River: Hellgate Recreation Area Proposed Recreation Area Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (March 2003) and its Record of Decision (July 2004) (RAMP);
- *The Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan* (June 1995) and the *Medford District Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (September 1994);
- *The Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl, and Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (April 1994), (aka the Northwest Forest Plan) (NFP);
- *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (March 2000), and the *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendment to the Survey & Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines* (January 2001);
- *Record of Decision and Resource Plan Amendment for Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in southwest Oregon, Coos Bay, Medford, and Roseburg Districts* (May 2004) and the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Management of Port-Orford-Cedar in Southwest Oregon* (January 2004).

## III. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act

The proposed action is categorically excluded under the following Department of the Interior categorical exclusion: (Department Manual 516 DM 11.9):

### D. Rangeland Management

*(10) Vegetation management activities, such as seeding, planting, invasive plant removal, installation of erosion control devices (e.g., mats/ straw/chips), and mechanical treatments, such as crushing, piling, thinning, pruning, cutting, chipping, mulching, mowing, and prescribed fire when the activity is necessary for the management of vegetation on public lands.*

*Such activities:*

- (a) Shall not exceed 4,500 acres per prescribed fire project and 1,000 acres for other vegetation management projects;*
- (b) Shall not be conducted in Wilderness areas or Wilderness Study Areas;*
- (c) Shall not include the use of herbicides, pesticides, biological treatments or the construction of new permanent roads or other new permanent infrastructure;*
- (d) May include temporary roads which are defined as roads authorized by contract, permit, lease, other written authorization, or emergency operation not intended to be part of the BLM transportation system and not necessary for long-term resource management.*

*Temporary roads shall be designed to standards appropriate for the intended uses, considering safety, cost of transportation, and impacts on land and resources; and (e) Shall require the treatment of temporary roads constructed or used so as to permit the reestablishment, by artificial or natural means, of vegetative cover on the roadway and areas where the vegetative cover was disturbed by the construction or use of the road, as necessary to minimize erosion from the disturbed area. Such treatment shall be designed to reestablish vegetative cover as soon as practicable, but at least within 10 years after the termination of the contract.*

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if extraordinary circumstances exist that would require further environmental analysis and documentation (516 DM 2, Appendix 2). None have been identified (see attached).

#### **IV. Persons and Agencies Consulted**

During the preparation of the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Hellgate Section Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project extensive public involvement and collaboration opportunities were provided (See EA p. 16). The Taylor Creek Neighborhood Plan included additional collaboration between the BLM and the other landowners within the Taylor Creek Neighborhood boundary.

#### **V. Implementation Date**

This project will be implemented as outlined below and as consistent with Oregon Department of Forestry fire closures and other seasonal restrictions as outlined in Appendix B of the EA.

#### **VI. Decision and Rationale**

It is my decision to implement the Taylor Creek Neighborhood Hazardous Fuel Reduction project, as described. I have reviewed the plan conformance statement and have determined that the proposed actions are in conformance with the approved land use plan. It is consistent with my previous decision regarding the Rogue River Hazardous Fuel Reduction project. No further environmental analysis is required.

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Abbie Jossie  
Field Manager  
Grants Pass Resource Area

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Date

## **VII. Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities**

Administrative remedies may be available to persons who believe that they will be adversely affected by this decision. Persons wishing to seek administrative recourse must do so in accordance with BLM regulations and the procedures and requirements of 43 CFR § 5003 - Administrative Remedies and 43 CFR Subtitle A, Part 4, Subpart E, both as modified by the Federal Register Notice on June 5, 2003 (Vol. 68, No. 108).

This wildfire management decision is issued under 43 CFR Part 5003.1 and will be effective immediately following the completion of a 15 day public review period for the neighborhood plan and this CE. Vegetation, soil, or other resources on public lands are at substantial risk of wildfire due to drought, fuels buildup, or other reasons, or are at immediate risk of erosion or other damage due to wildfire. The BLM has determined that the hazardous fuel buildup in the project area and the substantial risk of wildfire to the residential, business and river values in the project area call for expeditious implementation of this decision to facilitate hazardous fuel reduction (43 CFR § 5003.1(b)). Notwithstanding the provisions of 43 CFR 4.21(a) (1), filing a notice of appeal under 43 CFR Part 4 does not automatically suspend the effect of the decision. The Interior Board of Land Appeals will decide an appeal within 60 days after all pleadings have been filed and within 180 days after the appeal was filed (43 CFR § 4.416).

Any contest of this decision should state specifically which portion or element of the decision is being protested and cite the applicable CFR regulations.

## **VII. Contact Person**

For additional information concerning this decision contact:

Tim Gonzales  
Fire Prevention and Mitigation Specialist  
Grants Pass Resource Area  
Medford District BLM  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, OR 94504  
(541) 471-6643

**NEPA COMPLIANCE  
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW  
CE #OR 117-08-31**

**ROGUE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER HELLGATE RECREATION  
SECTION HAZARDOUS FUEL REDUCTION PROJECT  
-- Taylor Creek Neighborhood Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project --**

The Department of the Interior Manual 516 2.3A (3) requires the review of the following “extraordinary circumstances” (516 DM 2 Appendix 2) to determine if an otherwise categorically excluded action would require additional analysis and environmental documentation.

*1) Have significant impacts on public health or safety.*

( ) Yes (X) No    Remarks: The project is designed to increase public safety by making the Taylor Creek Neighborhood area less susceptible to intense wildfire damage and to improve the potential for safe and prompt suppression should a wildfire occur.

*2) Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.*

( ) Yes (X) No    Remarks: The Taylor Creek Neighborhood project is within the congressionally designated boundaries of the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River. The August 2003 Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Hellgate Section Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project Environmental Assessment considered the overall project and developed project and neighborhood plan design criteria that insures the Outstandingly Remarkable Values of the Hellgate Section will not be adversely affected. It is also in conformance with The *Rogue National Wild and Scenic River: Hellgate Recreation Area Proposed Recreation Area Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (March 2003) and its Record of Decision (July 2004).

*3) Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)].*

( ) Yes (X) No    Remarks: No such controversy has been identified for the proposed action. Initial controversy was addressed in the overall project design, analysis and decisions documented in the August 2003 Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Hellgate Section Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project Environmental Assessment and DR/FONSI.

*4) Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.*

( ) Yes (X) No

*5) Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.*

☐ Yes ☒ No Remarks: This decision will not establish any precedent nor does it represent a decision in principle with potential significant effects. The Hellgate Section level hazardous fuel reduction plan and EA were prepared to insure that this was not the case.

*6) Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.*

☐ Yes ☒ No Remarks: No cumulatively significant effects have been identified. The Hellgate Section hazardous fuel reduction plan was prepared expressly to assess the potential for cumulative significant effects of the fuel reduction treatments within the Congressionally designated Rogue Wild and Scenic River and to establish key Neighborhood Plan planning sideboards and project design features that would insure that significant cumulative effects would be precluded.

*7) Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

*8) Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

*9) Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

*10) Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).*

☐ Yes ☒ No

*11) Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).*

☐ Yes ☒ No

*12) Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).*

(X)Yes ( ) No Remarks: The Hellgate Recreation Section Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project EA identified (p. 13) the potential for noxious weed invasion and spread and that there is currently a moderate to high probability for this. Project design features are included in the project to reduce the potential for noxious weed spread. No further environmental analysis or documentation is needed regarding noxious weeds.

**Reviewer(s):**

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Silviculture, Vegetation Dynamics & Port-Orford Cedar

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Botany

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Cultural Resources

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Fisheries

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Wildlife

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Soils/Hydrology

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Visual Resources / Wild & Scenic River Values

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Engineering

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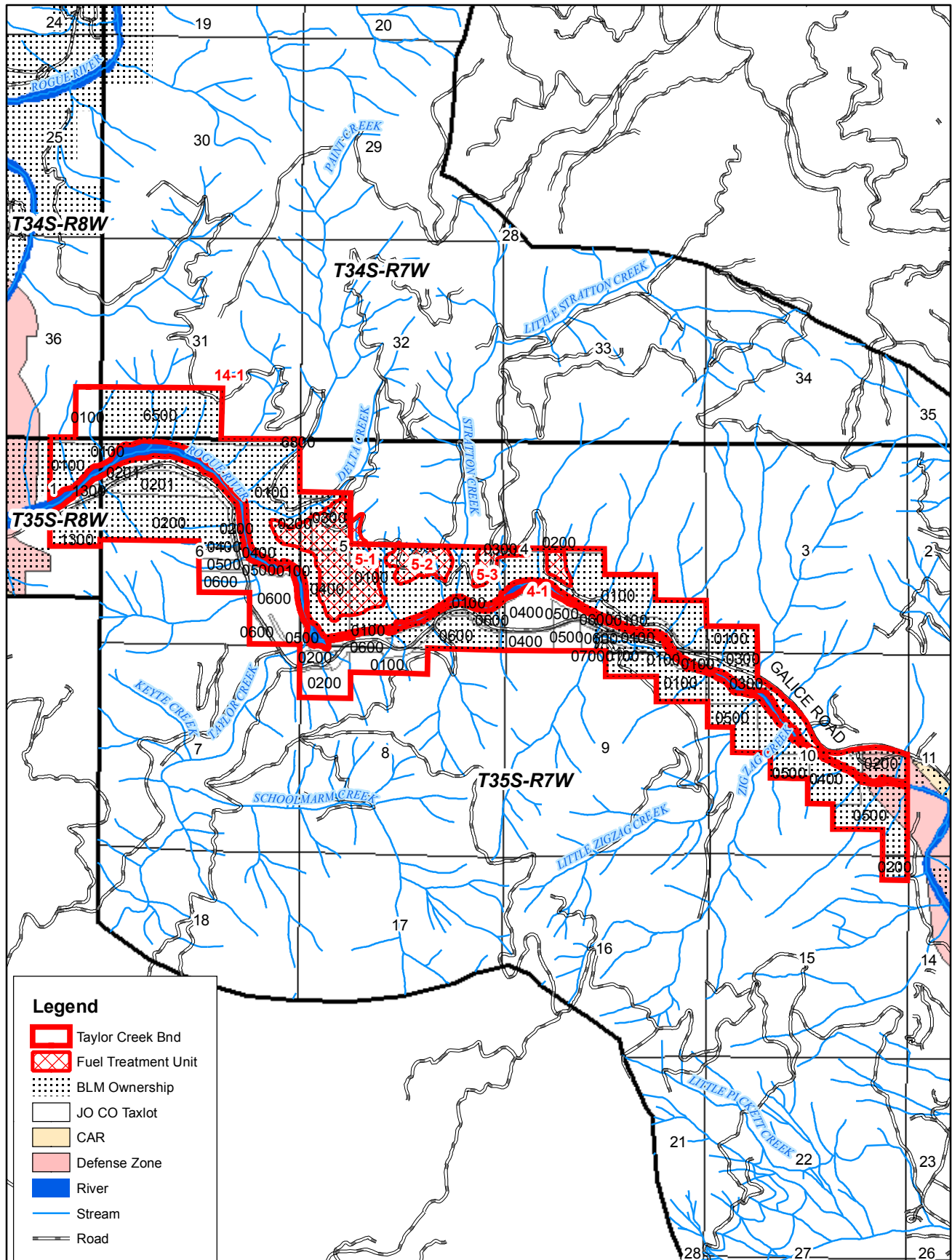
Fire and Fuels Management

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Planning and Environmental Review

# Taylor Creek Project Area

## Map J - Fuels Treatment Units



1:44,000



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources and may be updated without notification.

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Prepared by: dllover  
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